

Stress Test/Treadmill Test

What is a Stress Test/Treadmill Test?

It is an electrocardiogram (ECG) recorded during and immediately after strenuous exercise. Sometimes it is called the Bruce test or exercise electrocardiogram.

Why is this test done?

This test shows how well your heart works during exercise.

Your doctor may want you to have this test to:

- See if you have coronary artery disease
- See how your heart responds to exercise
- Find the level of exercise that is safe for your heart
- See how certain drugs affect your heart

What happens during the test?

You will walk on a treadmill, beginning with a slow walk and progressing with increased levels of speed and grade.

You must tell the doctor or nurse how you feel during the test. The test will stop if you become too tired, feel faint, or lightheaded, or have shortness of breath or chest pain.

Your blood pressure will be taken often both during and after exercise.

What do I have to do to get ready for the test?

Do not eat or smoke for four hours before the test.

Dress for exercise, ***wear comfortable walking shoes. Do not wear boots or high heels.*** Women should wear a comfortable, supportive sports bra, if you have one.

Take your medications the day of the test, unless your doctor tells you not to.

Where is the test done?

The test is done in the ECG department (Room 3M-103 third floor) at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. If you are an inpatient, an escort will take you to the ECG department in a wheelchair. Your doctor will schedule the test and tell you the date and time.

What are the risks involved?

There is a small risk of heart damage or a heart attack. A doctor or nurse will be with you during the test. Everyone who helps with this test is trained to handle any emergency. A doctor or nurse will talk to you before the test. Be sure to ask him/her any questions you have. You will be asked to sign a consent form. This form gives the doctor/nurse your permission to do the test

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